

The Dispatch.

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SMOKELESS POWDER.

General Clement's article on "Smokeless Powder," in the *Journal des Sciences Militaires*, deals with the role of artillery, and with the influence of political action in the preparation for war. Unless the political action is continuous, it becomes extremely difficult to ensure unity of purpose, either in the objects to be attained or in the preparation and employment of the full resources of the country for war. This difficulty becomes all the greater when the naval and military forces are under separate Ministers. When the system of government is autocratic, and the Chief of the State is also supreme chief of the land and sea forces, continuity of purpose and action can be easily maintained; but in Democratic countries it can only be approximately attained by appointing a Minister of National Defence, or a Committee of Preparation for War, or perhaps, in France, by conferring on the Chief of the State less passive functions, and making him the real Chief of the Army.

In the "Great Questions of the Day," in the same paper, Major Nigote pictures the battles of the future with smokeless powder as invisible, where the object of each party will be to see without being seen. The introduction of smokeless powder will greatly facilitate amphibious and materially hamper minor tactical operations. On the battle-field the army which first takes advantage of the smokeless powder, its immense moral superiority over its adversary, whose movements will be embarrassed by a fire the origin of which he is unable to discover. The attack of a position in the field will somewhat resemble the attack of a fortress; for, as soon as the zone is reached which is swept by the infantry fire of the defence, advance in the open—except under peculiarly favorable conditions—will be impossible. When this dangerous zone is once reached, the attacking troops must—when not favored by the information of the ground—retreat to intrenchments, in order to take up under cover to a position whence the final assault can be delivered, which will most probably be either at daybreak or nightfall. Their operations will require time, so that a first-class battle will probably be an affair of days. Altogether, Major Nigote seems to be of opinion that the introduction of smokeless powder will prove to be the revenge of the defensive over the offensive, and that the infantry soldier will have not only to be a good shot, but a good navy to boot.

THE TRUE STATE OF BUSINESS.

The tightness in the money market still continues, and while there is a rift in the cloud of depression, yet it will be some time before matters will ease up materially, and the sun of prosperity make glad the faces of the people. A time like the present, when the banks are needed for accommodation, is the very time when they appear unable to extend any. The fact seems to have gone out to these institutions, "Close in on every side; if any money is loaned out, be careful it is on gilt-edged security, for short time, and at as much interest as you can possibly get." As a result business is being cramped, and if present tactics are followed out, there will be a number of other collapses before the end will be reached. This is deplorable, for the results will be disastrous.

In a time like the present, the policy should be to help each other. There would be no need for any serious thoughts of the outcome if a spirit of leniency was manifested. Help is not needed in times of plenty; it is now when assistance is appreciated. While the storm lasts, let the business men keep together.

THE DUNN & CO. FAILURE.

The sympathy of the whole people, without a single exception, goes out to DUNN & CO., in the hour of their financial difficulty. We presume that there was no more popular store in town than this old reliable house. The news that it had encountered came like a thunderbolt. The financial showing made by the assignee, as given in another column, tells the tale—a difficulty in making collections—and a consequent impossibility to settle with creditors. It is a matter of regret

when a store, in such a healthy condition as was DUNN & CO., that can show up thirty per cent. more assets than liabilities, has to succumb because of a failure to gather in even a small percentage of its accounts. Undoubtedly the creditors of the institution in question will come out all right, and after everything is amicably adjusted and times brighten up, we hope to see the firm cater to the wants of the public again.

The Heroism of a Child. In the *Bordeleian Library* at Oxford is a most touching record of heroism and self-sacrifice on the part of a child.

The lower door of St. Leonard's Church, Bridgworth, was left open, and two young boys, wandering in, were tempted to mount to the upper part, and scramble from beam to beam. All at once a joist gave way. The beam on which they were standing became displaced. The elder had just time to grasp it when falling, while the younger, slipping over his body, caught hold of his comrade's legs. In this fearful position the poor lads hung, crying vainly for help, for no one was near.

At length the boy clinging to the beam became exhausted. He could no longer support the double weight. He called out to the lad below that they were both done for.

"Could you save yourself if I were to loose you?" replied the younger lad. "I think I could," replied the elder. "Then good-by, and God bless you!" said the little fellow, loosing his hold. Another second and he was dashed to pieces on the stone floor below. His companion clambered to a place of safety.

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